



ALFRETON URBAN

DISTRICT COUNCIL.

[illegible]

Dr. Edward Gaylor's

ANNUAL

REPORT for 1896.

From Jan. 1st, 1896, to Dec. 31st, 1896.

ALFRETON:

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1897.

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Dr. Edward Gaylor's 24th Annual Report. 1896.

TO THE ALFRETON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

Last year I commenced my Twenty-third Report by expressing my regret that it was not so favourable in character as was the year previous, viz., 1894.

In now submitting my Report for the year 1896 (being my twenty-fourth) I cannot congratulate myself nor you as a Council on any very great improvement in the vital statistics of the year. It is a singular coincidence that the total number of Deaths in 1895 was 286, and this is also the exact number of Deaths for the year 1896. Of course the *increase* of the population during the year just brings the year's Death Rate a few decimals lower than that of 1895.

If we take the total number of *Notifiable Diseases* we find it 20 per cent less than in 1895, but unfortunately we can't eliminate the sufferings produced, and the expense incurred by these preventible diseases, and seeing that the deaths from Notifiable Diseases has increased, we can't indulge in very much gratification.

As we go on we shall find once again the great blot on the District which we have endeavoured to wipe out for many years. I mean the large Infant Mortality which has grown from 48 per cent in 1895 to 54 per cent in 1896. I shall have something to say about this farther on in my Report.

Notification of Infectious Diseases Act.—The number of cases notified, since you adopted the Act in 1892, are as follows:—

| | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1892 | ... | ... | ... | 114 |
| 1893 | ... | ... | ... | 84 |
| 1894 | ... | ... | ... | 81 |
| 1895 | ... | ... | ... | 452 |
| 1896 | ... | ... | ... | 314 |

This gives an average number of Notifications for each year of exactly 209.

The last two years, 1895 and 1896, are both, as you know, the Scarlet Fever Epidemic years.

The Diseases Notified were as follows:—

| | | | | |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Scarlet Fever | ... | ... | ... | 262 |
| Membranous Croup | ... | ... | ... | 2 |
| Diphtheria | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| Typhoid Fever | ... | ... | ... | 15 |
| Puerperal Fever | ... | ... | ... | 7 |
| Erysipelas | ... | ... | ... | 27 |
| Total | ... | ... | ... | 314 |

The following Diseases, which also are Notifiable, had no existence:—Small Pox, Typhus Fever, Continued Fever, Relapsing Fever, and Cholera.

Measles, Whooping Cough, and Diarrhœa are not "Notifiable."

The above 314 Diseases were Notified as occurring in the following localities:—

| | | | | |
|----------------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Alfreton | ... | ... | ... | 42 |
| Birchwood | ... | ... | ... | 44 |
| Greenhill Lane | ... | ... | ... | 18 |
| Ironville | ... | ... | ... | 9 |
| Lea Brooks | ... | ... | ... | 33 |

| | | | | |
|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Pye Bridge | ... | ... | ... | 6 |
| Riddings | ... | ... | ... | 32 |
| Sleet Moor | ... | ... | ... | 8 |
| Somercotes | ... | ... | ... | 60 |
| Swanwick | ... | ... | ... | 62 |
| Total | ... | ... | ... | 314 |

Of these 314 cases of Infectious Diseases 113 or 35 per cent. were under five 5 years of age, and 201 or 64 per cent. were above that age.

The following list will show the variableness of the Disease Notifications for each month throughout the year:—

| | | | |
|-----------|-----|-----|----|
| January | ... | ... | 31 |
| February | ... | ... | 27 |
| March | ... | ... | 39 |
| April | ... | ... | 24 |
| May | ... | ... | 27 |
| June | ... | ... | 18 |
| July | ... | ... | 19 |
| August | ... | ... | 25 |
| September | ... | ... | 35 |
| October | ... | ... | 28 |
| November | ... | ... | 13 |
| December | ... | ... | 28 |

Total ... 314

We will now make a few remarks on these Zymotic Diseases, culled from my short notes in my visiting book, made upon the spot at the time of the existence of the Disease.

Small-pox.—We have had no cases of this Disease, and I hope one reason is that your District is a well-vaccinated District. I have no means of knowing whether it be so or not, but I presume it is not much affected by the mischievous agitation against such a well-known protective as *efficient Vaccination*.

Almost all the Royal Commissioners who sat upon that subject gave their testimony to its efficacy, and also advised re-vaccination at a certain period of life. The rock on which some of them split, was upon the present mode of carrying out the compulsory clauses of the Act, and they made valuable suggestions for the *continuance* of vaccination for the future, thus clearly showing their own profound belief in its protective influence, when properly performed, with pure Lymph, and sufficient care taken with the patient during the vaccine period.

In 1895 I had to explain in detail four cases of this Disease.

I presume we shall soon have some County arrangement about Small-pox cases, as it is quite evident our proposed Joint Isolation Hospital will not be adapted for small-pox patients. Small-pox Hospitals must be much more *isolated*, and ought not to be near any other cases of disease. But this is a question we need not trouble very much about at present, for we have a Joint Small-pox Hospital Tent, with all the requisite fittings, &c., which can be erected in a very short time, and

which is in every way adapted for its purpose, and though my first experience of it was in the summer months of the year 1895, I believe the tents can be properly warmed so as to make patients comfortable, and the whole business on that occasion was eminently satisfactory to myself, and the patients expressed themselves as being thankful and happy under such circumstances. Their isolation and imprisonment were the objectionable features, next to the dangerous and repulsive disease.

Scarlet Fever.—The 262 cases of Scarlet Fever were spread over 190 so-called Infected Houses, as follows:—

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 140 Houses had one case each | 140 |
| 37 " " two cases " " | 74 |
| 7 " " three " " | 21 |
| 4 " " four " " | 16 |
| 1 " " five " " | 5 |
| 1 " " six " " | 6 |
| 190 Houses. | Total cases 262 |

The cases were distributed in all parts of the District as the former list will show, but the greater number of Scarlet Fever cases occurred at Somercotes, Birchwood, Swanwick, and Lea Brooks.

Out of the total 262 cases of Scarlet Fever distributed all over the District more or less, there were only 6 deaths, and these were in the following Parishes and parts of the District:—

| | |
|---|--|
| Female, 18 months, Scarlet Fever, at Riddings, in April | |
| " 15 years " " Birchwood, in July | |
| Male 4 days " " " August | |
| " 3 years " " Swanwick " Oct. | |
| Female 4 " " " " " | |
| " 4 " " " " " | |

Thus it will be noticed that Swanwick had 62 cases and three Deaths. Riddings one Death in 32 cases. Birchwood two Deaths in 44 cases. We shall talk about the mild character of the Disease itself (as we had it in 1896) later on.

Before the first Death occurred in the month of April, 97 cases had been notified.

None of the six Deaths from this Disease need any special remark from me. The case at Birchwood, 15 years of age, was complicated with Pneumonia, which in itself is a very serious disease.

As I said in my last Report, there was no wonder at the Disease hanging about the District as it has done—only a few cases was there, or could there be, anything like isolation. The mild character of the Disease made very many persons utterly careless about the whole thing, in fact, scores of them repudiated having the Disease when I visited them, others said as the Disease was of so mild a character, the children had better have the disease now, than wait for a more severe outbreak. "They had to have it, and might as well have it now and get rid of it."

Then, again, very few persons thought it necessary to do anything to the rooms and their houses beyond the usual necessary cleansing. They certainly used a few disinfectants in a casual sort of way—not believing then useful or necessary—and many more, I am sorry to say, did neither, as was quite evident to my own senses in more ways than one. My printed instructions and caution papers, which are left at every house I visit (and those I do not from various reason, have generally one sent them per post), are of some use, because it prevents people pleading ignorance of what they should do when I complain of their neglect.

Your Officers alone know what we have to contend with. I take your Inspector with me (not always), and he witnesses quite enough, without his having special professional knowledge to account for the wide dissemination of disease.

I hope the Council will soon see their way to carry out section 5 and 6 of "The Infectious Diseases Prevention Act of 1890." We should then more certainly have command of an epidemic, and reduce very materially the cases of sickness and its attendant cost.

Again this year, I feel confident milk has had nothing to do with the disease. We had Scarlet Fever in the houses of milk sellers, at Greenhill Lane and Swanwick, but I exercised all the powers under the Act so that the milk should be no element of danger.

Of course all really insanitary conditions were dealt with by your Inspector serving notices (and what is of more importance), and seeing they were carried out in the way indicated, this is with one exception, and that is as to the removal of accumulations of filth and refuse. This is most difficult, poor people can't remove it themselves, and they can't possibly pay persons to take it away; and even if they could the nuisance remains till it is quite convenient for the paid man to fetch it away—and this is only at certain seasons of the year. I shall have more to say upon this point farther on.

The nuisances here spoken of do not of themselves cause Scarlet Fever, but under dirty conditions like those the disease would be more likely to spread, because people who live under such conditions and breathe such polluted atmosphere lose their vitality, are less vigorous, and their health is not sound, so it makes them more liable to take disease of whatever kind, which may be haunting the locality.

Diphtheria and Membranous Croup.—There were no Deaths from these Diseases during the year 1896, but three cases were notified. One Diphtheria and two cases of Membranous Croup. I have put them together because their symptoms and danger are very much in common, and though the Notification of Diseases Act of 1890 make them two separate and distinct diseases. Medical science has made such strides since that period, that there is a general consensus of professional opinion that they are strongly allied, and difficult to differentiate.

None of these cases presented any particular features to call for notice, but they occurred at Ironville, Riddings and Somercotes, their ages being 9 and 3 years, and 15 months respectively.

Enteric or Typhoid Fever.—In the year 1895 we had 19 cases to deal with, and three Deaths from this disease; for the year 1896 we have 15 cases and four deaths.

The first case was of a boy, 10 years of age, at Greenhill Lane. He had been ailing some weeks before he began with Typhoid Fever. He made a good recovery from the Fever. A nasty, dilapidated, filthy closet, and no ashpit was dealt with here.

Next case was at Park Street, Alfreton. A young girl, 14 years of age, had been away from Alfreton about three weeks before her attack. Some houses above had their drains passing through the coal cellars of the houses, (one of six in a row,) where this case occurred. The girl went out to work in the day, and came home at night.

At a house in Somercotes there were three cases—Female 39 (who died), female 11 years, male 14 years.

The neighbourhood was badly drained, and had a great deal of filth laying about in all directions, and some of the people were not over clean themselves. The owners of the property carried out a better system of drains and traps, and did a good deal of clearing away and cleaning up.

Another case was at the house of a milk-seller at Greenhill Lane. The milk came from Swanwick, and he sold the milk on his rounds. The milk did not come near this house after the disease broke out, but went to a place some distance off, and an inmate of the house was at once sent away for a month or two, so

that she might sell the milk and keep the poor man's custom together. Of course she had previously had nothing whatever to do with the patient. A dilapidated open ashpit existed here.

Another case occurred at Riddings at an Inn there. A man 37 years of age took the Disease. He had plenty of good nursing. The house was scrupulously clean—disinfectants were carefully and freely used, and evacuations burned afterwards. The case resolved itself into a mild form, and he made a good recovery.

Another case at Sleetmoor Lane was a young man, 19 years of age. There was nothing insanitary on the premises; he had not been from home for three months previously; was a very hard-working man, and there was no history but a probable chill.

A fatal case at Somercotes ought to have come in before this. It was a woman 55 years of age, who had inflammation of the Bowels some weeks previously. Nothing about the premises was wrong, and she had every care. The house was one of a row of six, at the end house was a fish-dealer, but I found nothing wrong.

The next case was that of a child 3 years. Occurred where the three other cases in one house were. This was a fatal case also.

A case of a female, 10 months, died of Typhoid Fever at Ironville, complicated with Brain Disease. The sanitary conditions of Ironville was not responsible for the above.

Another very mild case was at Alfreton. A large house, everything quite sanitary, six bedrooms, patient isolated, and Trained Nurse, with every possible precaution.

So we find the Deaths from Typhoid Fever were as follows:—

| | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Female, 39 years, | Somercotes |
| " 54 " | " |
| Male, 3 " | " |
| Female, 10 months.. .. | Ironville |

This disease is to all intents what is known as a filth disease, though of course it may in some mysterious way attack an inmate of a house that is sanitary in every respect. This may be accounted for by the person having been from home, and come in contact of some of its "factors." He may have drank impure water in which may be the Typhoid Microbe, and other matters which need not be mentioned here.

It is generally understood and accepted that this Disease, Typhoid Fever, is evidence of a bad sanitary condition, and its prevalence to any great extent points to a polluted water supply and all sorts of insanitary defects; while its comparative absence indicates a fairly satisfactory sanitary condition. Certainly no disease has yielded to the sanitarian with as much agreed certainty as Typhoid Fever, and though I report 15 cases spread over your District, I don't think it reflects either upon your Officers or your condition generally.

The filthy midden system are just the places where the Typhoid Microbe would grow and multiply, if it once got thereby a case of Fever not at that time perhaps diagnosed. The refuse in every cottagers' house would be much better burnt on the fire at the time it is made than allowed to accumulate and go to the ashpit or some other heap, and so form, so to speak, a breeding ground for an important microbe. We are getting rid of these matters as fast as we can, or we should have a darker list of Typhoid cases.

Puerperal Fever.—The cases occurred as follows.—

Park Street—Woman 20 years of age. Attended by midwife. Here was uncovered open ashpit between two closets, and pigs with defective drainage.

Ironville—Woman 19 years. Fatal case. Nothing insanitary about premises.

Outram Terrace—Fatal case.

Riddings—Fatal case.

The total number which occurred was seven, as follows, with three fatal cases:—

Alfreton 4, Ironville 2, Riddings 1.

Medical men who attend these cases know how to thoroughly disinfect themselves, and in fact practice what is known as antiseptic midwifery.

The lying-in condition is quite serious enough without certain uneducated persons actively interfering with it, who neither know how, nor believe in so-called antiseptics in such cases, and as they have very often just come from some other cases of the same kind, or from some infectious disease of another kind, they are the sources of great danger.

Doctors under all circumstances have ways and means well known to themselves, to prevent them spreading any disease by their presence.

I don't mean to say some of these women I am writing about are not very useful in some times and places, but very often they are not but just the very opposite. When I suspend one of these women from the exercise of her functions, it is simply to protect those who might employ her, and not any objection I may have to her work.

Erysipelas.—27 Cases of this Disease were Notified, and one Death resulted from the Disease. This was a case of injury, and what is known as Surgical Erysipelas set up in the part, and quickly destroyed life.

The other cases were principally of the common facial character, though a few were due to Ulceration of the leg &c. The Disease in a District like our own, is of a very different character to what it is in large centres of population, and the Notification of the Disease is made obligatory more for the sake of such places than of our own.

Measles.—This, as you know, is not a Notifiable Disease, but it was an Epidemic in many parts of the Districts, and the Deaths from it are given as under. There were 17 Deaths under 5 years of age, 2 over 5 years of age.

| | | | |
|---------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| Male, | 19 months, | Riddings, | in September |
| Female, | 17 " | Alfreton, | " " |
| Male, | 3 years, | Ironville, | " October. |
| " | 10 months, | Alfreton, | " " |
| " | 17 " | " | " " |
| " | 3 years, | " | " " |
| Female, | 5 " | Ironville, | " " |
| " | 18 months, | " | " December. |
| Male, | 12 " | " | " " |
| " | 22 " | " | " " |
| " | 2 years, | " | " " |
| Female, | 3 " | " | " " |
| Male, | 2 " | Alfreton, | " " |
| " | 18 months, | " | " " |
| " | 16 " | Lea Brooks, | " " |
| " | 2 years, | Sleet Moor, | " " |
| " | 20 months, | " | " " |
| Female, | 2 years, | Somercotes, | " " |
| " | 3 weeks, | " | " " |

So the Deaths stand as follows:—Alfreton 6, Riddings 1, Ironville 7, Lea Brooks 1, Sleetmoor 2, Somercotes 2; total 19.

Of course there were a very great number of cases, or there would not have been that number of Deaths. When we come to "schoolclosing" we shall see the very large falling off in the attendances, principally on account of this very peculiar Disease.

One reason why this Disease is not Notifiable, is because it is infectious before the eruption comes out, and before anybody can tell the Disease at all, so that Notification is not of much use, because the Disease has got foothold before anybody knows.

The Disease does not appear to be connected with dirty or unhealthy surroundings, although when Measles does attack the children of the better class, the mortality from the Disease is not less because it is of a milder

form, but on account of the extra care, better nursing, less exposure, purer atmosphere, and the general management. It is a very fatal disease to young children, and though there are folks who think nothing serious about the disease, it costs more lives than Scarlet Fever does, and its after consequences (through neglect) are quite as terrible—such as blindness, deafness, and various chest diseases.

Whooping Cough.—Six children died of this Disease under the age of 5 years.

| | | |
|--------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Female, 13 months, | Greenhill Lane | in August. |
| " 8 " | Ironville | " November. |
| Male, 3 years, | " | " " |
| Female, 18 months, | " | " " |
| " 4 years, | Pye Bridge, | " " |
| " 1 year, | Lea Brooks, | " " |

This next to Measles, is the most fatal Infantile Disease, and of course sanitary arrangements have very little effect upon it. Isolation, warmth and general care are principally to be relied upon, although everybody knows that all sorts of rough quack and superstitious remedies are made use of by certain people. This is another of those Diseases which only school closing can check, if it assume an epidemic form.

Diarrhoea.—Two Deaths only occurred from this Disease, both in infancy, and neither of them reflects upon the sanitarian. One case was only 21 days old, and the other 13 months; one ill from its birth, the other intestinal irritation from teething. The District is now particularly free from Diarrhoea.

Influenza.—A female, 67 years of age, died of this Disease, complicated with Pneumonia, at Swanwick, in April 1896.

Uncertified Deaths.—There were 9 cases in all, 4 under 5 years of age, and 5 above that age, as follow:—

| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Female, 67 yrs., | Failure of Heart's action, | at Swanwick |
| " 62 " | " " | Somercotes |
| Male, 50 " | " " | Lea Brooks |
| " 3 months, | Convulsions, | Birchwood |
| Female, 16 " | " " | Somercotes |
| " 15 " | " " | Swanwick |
| Male, 44 yrs., | Heart Disease, | Alfreton |
| Female, 76 " | Constipation, | " |
| Male, 25 days, | Measles, | Riddings |

This is exactly the same number of Uncertified Deaths as in 1895. The uncertified cases in England and Wales amount to about 5 per cent., in your District it is a little over 3 per cent.

Phthisis.—14 Deaths, all over the age of 5 years, were registered from this terrible Disease.

This Disease, though there are grave objections to its notification, is a very Infectious Disease. Of course it can be very much prevented or considerably modified by plenty of fresh, pure air in the rooms, pure water, dry dwellings, and plenty of cubic space. The infectious particles are contained particularly in the Sputa or Phlegm which the patient expectorates, and if this is spit upon the ground, or on any flooring, and becomes dried up, it mixes with the atmosphere in the form of dust, and healthy persons may swallow it, and breathe it, and so take the disease.

Milk from a tuberculous cow will give the disease, and it is to be hoped that the Royal Commission on Tubercular Disease in Animals may be productive of some means whereby these dangerous animals may not disseminate the disease either by the milk or the meat.

Rooms occupied by Phthisical persons should be very cleansed and disinfected, and advantage should always be taken of their sufferers' absence, so as to throw wide open the windows and dilute the diseased atmosphere and purify the whole room or chamber.

In Brompton Hospital, for these diseases, the patients don't expectorate in vessels, but in a sort of soft paper handkerchiefs, which are immediately burnt.

If we take Tubercular Diseases of all kinds, we shall find that the Deaths equal all the other Zymotic Diseases put together.

Bronchitis and Pneumonia.—No less than 48 Deaths occurred from these Diseases of the Respiratory Organs, and 37 of these were those of children of tender years, viz., under 5 years of age. This is a terrible indictment against what is the general care (or rather want of care) among the children of your District. I don't know what to add to what I have already said upon this subject year after year, and I only repeat it, hoping that my Report will fall into the hands of somebody who will stand appalled at the sacrifice of infant life in the District, and indicate some measure which will tend to its modification.

Heart Disease.—19 Deaths were registered from this class of Disease.

It is noticed here because it is one of the Diseases in Table A of the Local Government Board, and not because we as a Sanitary Authority can do much to prevent it, except by preserving and strengthening the lives of the very young, so that they may grow up strong and vigorous, and so not re-produce beings of a puny, weak, half-developed, feeble, dwarfish and imperfect race.

Cancer.—In 1895 I reported 8 Deaths from this dire Disease. For the year 1896 I have only 4 cases, and mention it here for the use of persons who may be interested in the increase or decrease of the Disease.

Deaths from all Causes.—The particular Diseases are all set out on Table I, attached to this report.

136 Males and 150 females died during the year, making a total of 286, the same as last year, only that the different sexes were not distributed in the same proportions.

Of these 286 Deaths, no less than 156 died before they reached the age of 5 years. This is equal to 54 per cent. of the whole number, thus amounting to more than half your total mortality.

These 156 children had a mean age at Death of "nine months."

The total Death Rate for the year 1896 is 16.53 per 1,000, as against 1895 of 16.87.

Although the same number of Deaths occurred in both years, the "decimals" reduction is accounted for of course by the natural increase of the population from December 31, 1895, to December 31, 1896. It is a little singular, but of course is a mere coincidence.

Forty-eight aged persons, that is to say, those who lived over 65 years, had a mean age at Death of 84 years, equal to a Death Rate of 2.77 per 1,000, or over 16 per cent. of the whole Deaths.

The male Death Rate was 7.86 per 1,000, and the female Death Rate was 8.67 per 1,000.

The total Death Rate for 24 years past is 15.50 per 1,000, and valuable as may be Death Rates, they are deceptive unless they can be taken over a number of years, and the "mean rate" calculated as above.

The Deaths were registered in the following months:

| | | |
|-----------|-----|----|
| January | ... | 20 |
| February | ... | 21 |
| March | ... | 22 |
| April | ... | 22 |
| May | ... | 20 |
| June | ... | 16 |
| July | ... | 32 |
| August | ... | 19 |
| September | ... | 21 |
| October | ... | 22 |
| November | ... | 26 |
| December | ... | 45 |

| | | |
|-------|-----|-----|
| Total | ... | 286 |
|-------|-----|-----|

It will be seen that the month of December was the worst month, no less than 15 cases of Measles occurring in that month.

The 130 persons who escaped the dangers of infant life, and lived 5 years and upwards, had a *mean age at Death of 57 years.*

DEATHS IN THE QUARTERS :

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| March Quarter | 63 |
| June Quarter | 58 |
| September Quarter | 72 |
| December Quarter | 93 |

Total ... 286

STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF THE YEAR'S MORTALITY.

Total Deaths, 286; 16.53 per 1,000.

| DEATHS. | PER CENT. |
|---|-----------|
| Under 1 year of age 93 .. 5.37 per 1000, or 32 | |
| 1 and under 5 years 156 .. 9.01 .. | 54 |
| 5 .. 15 years 7 .. .4 .. | 2 |
| 15 .. 25 years 18 .. 1.04 .. | 6 |
| 25 .. 65 years 57 .. 3.29 .. | 19 |
| 65 years and upwards .. 48 .. 2.77 .. | 16 |
| Notifiable Diseases..... 14 .. .8 .. | 4 |
| Zymotic Diseases..... 41 .. 2.36 .. | 14 |
| Measles 19 .. 1.09 .. | 6 |
| Whooping Cough and | |
| Diarrhoea..... 8 .. .46 .. | 2 |
| Phthisis 14 .. .8 .. | 4 |
| Bronchitis 48 .. 2.77 .. | 16 |
| Heart Disease..... 19 .. 1.09 .. | 6 |
| Uncertified Cases 9 .. .52 .. | 3 |
| Inquests 13 .. .75 .. | 4 |
| Male Deaths 136 .. 7.86 .. | 47 |
| Female Deaths 150 .. 8.67 .. | 52 |

The percentages in all the above cases are calculated with decimals left out, because they are near enough to convey what is required.

The Diseases Notified included Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, Membranous Croup, Typhoid Fever, Puerperal Fever, and Erysipelas, and the total number was 314; of this number 113, or 35 per cent., were under 5 years of age, and 201, or 64 per cent., were over 5 years of age.

Scarlet Fever cases.—There were 262 of this class of Disease Notified, and 6 Deaths were caused by this Disease. This gives a Scarlet Fever mortality of 2.29 per cent., which shows the mild character of the Disease itself.

If we take 1895 and 1896 together, we find the following:—

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| 1895—Scarlet Fever cases .. | 401 |
| 1896—Scarlet Fever cases .. | 262 |
| Total | 663 |

The number of deaths in the two years was 17, and this gives a per centage of 2.56, so that the Disease kept up very much the same form in 1896 as it had done in 1895.

The 11 Deaths in 1895, out of 401 cases of Scarlet Fever, gave 2.74 per cent.

Inquests.—An unusually large number of Inquests have been held during the past year. They were as follows:—

Ironville—Female, 60 years—Suicide by drowning.
 Alfreton—Female, 3 years—Accidental burns.
 Birchwood—Female, 3½ years—Drowned in washtub.
 Pye Bridge—Female, 18 months—Accidental burns.
 Lea Brooks—Male, 5 weeks—Suffocated in bed.
 Birchwood—Male 2½ years—Accidentally scalded.

Riddings—Male, 73 years—Syncope.

„ —Male, 18 years—Syncope.

Somercotes—Male, 18 years—Kicked by a horse in Abdomen.

Somercotes—Male, 56 years—Fall from a cart.

Swanwick—Male, 22 years—Killed by coal waggon.

Greenhill Lane—Male, 11 years—Kick from a horse.

Riddings—Male, 3 years—Accidental burns.

Number of Deaths in the different Districts:—

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| Alfreton | 59 |
| Birchwood | 21 |
| Greenhill Lane | 19 |
| Ironville | 31 |
| Lea Brooks | 14 |
| Pye Bridge | 7 |
| Riddings | 43 |
| Sleet Moor | 9 |
| Somercotes | 56 |
| Swanwick | 27 |

Total ... 286

TABLE I.

ALFRETON URBAN DISTRICT.

CAUSES OF DEATH

FROM JANUARY 1ST, 1896, TO DECEMBER 31ST, 1896.

Population on December 31st, 1896, (calculated by Natural Increase since Census 1891,) 17,070.

Area in Acres, 4,625.

| DISEASES. | UNDER 5 YEARS OF AGE. | ABOVE 5 YEARS OF AGE. | TOTAL. |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| Scarlet Fever | 6 .. | — .. | 6 |
| Typhoid Fever.. .. | 1 .. | 3 .. | 4 |
| Erysipelas | 1 .. | — .. | 1 |
| Puerperal Fever | — .. | 3 .. | 3 |
| Measles | 17 .. | 2 .. | 19 |
| Whooping Cough | 6 .. | — .. | 6 |
| Diarrhoea | 2 .. | — .. | 2 |
| Phthisis | — .. | 14 .. | 14 |
| Bronchitis | 37 .. | 11 .. | 48 |
| Heart Disease | — .. | 19 .. | 19 |
| Influenza | — .. | 1 .. | 1 |
| Cancer | — .. | 4 .. | 4 |
| Tubercular Diseases | 21 .. | 1 .. | 22 |
| Brain Disease | 5 .. | 1 .. | 6 |
| Apoplexy | — .. | 10 .. | 10 |
| Paralysis | — .. | 2 .. | 2 |
| Epilepsy | — .. | 1 .. | 1 |
| Convulsions | 7 .. | 1 .. | 8 |
| Spinal Disease.. .. | 1 .. | — .. | 1 |
| Teething | 2 .. | — .. | 2 |
| Disease of Stomach | 3 .. | 1 .. | 4 |
| „ Bowels | 3 .. | 4 .. | 7 |
| „ Liver | 1 .. | 3 .. | 4 |
| Diabetes | — .. | 1 .. | 1 |
| Disease of Kidneys | 1 .. | 4 .. | 5 |
| Uterine Disease | — .. | 2 .. | 2 |
| Child Birth | — .. | 5 .. | 5 |
| Debility.. .. | 15 .. | 4 .. | 19 |
| Premature Birth | 16 .. | — .. | 16 |
| Old Age.. .. | — .. | 22 .. | 22 |
| Uncertified | 4 .. | 5 .. | 9 |
| Inquests | 7 .. | 6 .. | 13 |
| Totals | 156 | 130 | 286 |

EDWARD GAYLOR,

Medical Officer of Health.

Total Death Rate for 1896, 16.53 per 1,000.

Mean Death Rate for 24 years past, 15.50 per 1,000.

BIRTHS.

309 Boys and 284 Girls were born during the year, making a total of 593.

In 1895 the total Births were 581, and the Birth Rate for that year was 34.21 per 1,000.

The Birth Rate for 1896 is 34.68 per 1,000.

The Natural Increase of the Population is therefore 307.

The Births were Registered in the following quarters of the year :—

| | | | |
|-------------------|----|----|-----|
| March Quarter | .. | .. | 129 |
| June Quarter | .. | .. | 156 |
| September Quarter | .. | .. | 162 |
| December Quarter | .. | .. | 146 |
| Total | .. | .. | 593 |

The Mean Birth Rate for 24 years last past is 33.79 per 1,000.

Uninhabitable Houses.—Only one case of this kind came under notice. It was situate at Mount Pleasant, (a greater misnomer couldn't be imagined,) and consisted of one room, used for all purposes—pantry, coal-house, living-room, wash-house, bed-room, and kitchen; there was no back door, and the door for admission was up a couple of steps. There were no bedsteads in the room of course, but a couple of old sofas with old clothing and various other articles used as coverings. These were placed against the two walls of the room. A heap of coals lay under a table next the (one) window, the said table being used for all scullery and cooking purposes; near it was an old tin to put potato peelings and ashes in. A baby was in a cradle in one corner, all alone and crying bitterly, as the mother was absent on the occasion of my visit. The chimney poured down its smoke in the house, everything was beastly dirty, and had not a very pleasant odour, and yet I was told this was the residence of three adult women, and sometimes a lodger was added to make up *even* number.

Of course I immediately condemned it, and I felt sure the owner of the property couldn't have had the most remote idea of such a kennel, and the inmates were eventually got rid of, much to their chagrin, for even they thought there was *no place like home*.

School Hygiene and School Closing.—The Scarlet Fever Epidemic and Measles obliged me to close schools at Ironville, Somercotes and Swanwick, and I think the results amply proved the efficacy of school closing as one means of checking the spread of epidemics.

The period of closing the schools varied from four to six weeks, according to the character of the epidemics.

There is too much reason to fear that the Compulsory Education Act has been carried out too stringently with regard to enforcing school attendance. School Boards and other School Authorities enforce, through their officers, attendance at school, and a good deal of disease arises in consequence of a great many sickly children of poor parents (not being able to pay for a medical certificate) being sent to school in an unfit condition very often infectious diseases in their early stages, not recognisable with ordinary judgement. School authorities ought to pay a small fee for a medical certificate, and the general condition of the school would be improved, and much fiction removed, which now exists between parents and school authorities.

School Hygiene is very much neglected, and so-called education is being pushed to the front irrespective of its damage to health. Many schools are badly ventilated, over-crowded, cold, dirty, and badly arranged inside, and the closet accommodation outside is sometimes simply abominable.

I have no particular school in my mind, and my remarks are general over a very large District; but the

defective arrangements which one sees for scholars' accommodation is sometimes shocking. The structure itself is bad, seats too few, no privacy, and generally dirty. In many schools there is no drinking water supplied, and then the scholars quench their thirst with nasty rain water from dirty tubs or any other way.

"If schools are to be of real advantage to the country, "they must not be suffered to become centres from "which disease is spread abroad, and the health of the "children resorting to them should be watched over "with scrupulous care."

Over-crowding.—Only one case of this came under notice. The house was situate in Swanwick, and had one living-room and one bedroom. The bedroom gives accommodation to husband and wife and 7 children. The cubic space was far too limited, and both sexes were of course mixed up. Some excuse might be made from the fact that the husband had been out of work about nine months. The house was not dirty, but after my visit some of the elder children left, and so remedied the matter.

Disinfection and Prevention of Disease.—This is a matter which you must forgive so often referring to. Disinfection will never be thoroughly done until you have proper machinery to do it with, and one of your own employees told off for the duty.

It is quite certain in the presence of an epidemic such as we have had the last two years or more, your Inspector could only have undertaken a cursory over-looking of the work, but he would be able to supervise one of your intelligent workmen in the matter.

It is the walls and furniture, floors, &c., which never get properly attended to. Paper-hangings remain just the same after Scarlet Fever.

A most excellent and handy machine is what is known as the Equifex Sprayer. A chemical is used with it, which saturates everything, and which penetrates all the crevices, corners and fissures; is quite harmless to linen and clothing, though of course it will not supersede boiling of certain articles, &c., it is handy and convenient, and if the Council would get one, and put in force Section 6 of "The Infectious Diseases Prevention Act, 1890," we should soon have less Disease, and exercise much more control than we can now—and less Disease means less suffering and consequently less cost.

As you are expecting the Hospital sooner or later, it wouldn't be necessary to purchase such an article as Dr. Thresh's Disinfecter, by super-saturated steam, &c., for beddings, mattresses, clothing, &c., when you had got one of the above Spray Disinfectors. It in every way supersedes the clumsy, old sulphur fumigation, which is never perfectly done, because the gas escapes through many defects in the pasting up the "nicks."

Sewage Purification.—As you know, there are five Ive's Sewage Tanks in the following parts of the District:—Highfield, Meadow Lane, Lower Birchwood, Greenhill Lane, and Pye Bridge.

I have visited one or two of them, and I understand they work very well, and with your irrigation work system produces a fair effluent to pass into the streams.

Isolation Hospital.—This joint scheme with the six Urban and Rural Councils, drags its slow length along, but I don't think the delay arises from any fault of the Hospital committee. It seems to have got fast somewhere in high quarters. My other two Councils are equally anxious to experience its advantages, and complain of the slow routine.

Water Supply.—I am glad to hear very few complaints of the Water Supply, though there are persons yet who have still a fond hankering after the old polluted pump water, from near the closet in the garden. There can be no doubt that the public water supply has had a restraining effect upon Typhoid Fever, and it is very

rare to be able to trace the history of a case now, since the pumps have been disused.

Pig-keeping.—I have often asked the Council to get out a Bye-law referring to this matter. Of course if keeping a pig is a nuisance, it can be dealt with under the Public Health Act, but it is very unsatisfactory, because you can't convince one man that he doesn't keep his pig-stye as cleanly as his neighbour the other side of the street, nor can you explain to him the improved arrangements of his neighbour. To him a pig is a pig, and the same with the stye. A man also has a sort of attachment to his pig, if he doesn't altogether "pay the rint" it is an important article of food with him, and he watches daily the growth of his pet animal; and when pig-killing comes, it is a great day with him, and to eat off his own animal, fed by himself, gives him a pleasure which I don't like to interfere with unduly, and of course one has also to consider our general food supply, and do nothing to enhance the price of the workingman's food.

I press this upon you the more, because all over your District you have actually one thousand pig styes, so you see what a large question it is.

Some persons advocate a distance of 10 yards from a dwelling-house, others a less or greater distance, with regular cleansing and manure removal. It is worthy your earnest consideration, because they can be a nuisance if not kept properly.

Scavenging.—This, Gentlemen, is assuming great importance, and is coming to the fore-front in Preventive Medicine, which you as a Council must arrange to put in force.

Lord Palmerston once said that "Dirt was only matter in the wrong place," and it is so, and therefore it naturally follows that it ought to be removed.

Your district is divided into four Wards, viz., Alfreton, Somercotes and Riddings, Swanwick and Ironville.

The Alfreton Ward is the only Ward scavenged under the orders of the Council.

I find the estimated population of this Ward is about six thousand.

During the year 1896 it appears your contractor has removed no less than three thousand three hundred and fifty-five loads, and this has been done at a cost of two hundred and forty pounds.

Now, if we only take the census population of 1891, what do we find? Why, that more than eight thousand people at this moment are living surrounded with their own dirt, filth and refuse of every disgusting and unhealthy character; and another thing is, that this is the very part of the District where Disease has been most rife.

So far as the Alfreton Ward is concerned, we see that they are privileged to have all their accumulated refuse removed from their midst, with the result of much improved health, for a small sum of money less than a shilling per head per annum.

There is no doubt much to be said for and against "contracting," but it has now become the general convinced opinion among those who study the subject that the work is much better done (from every point of view,) by the District Councils own workmen. I am giving you an opinion which my reading and study warrants me in doing, and of course without any reference to your present contractor, whom I don't know at all even by name.

When I spoke of some eight thousand persons, where no scavenging was done, I left out Ironville, with its population of nearly two thousand, because as you know this part of your District is regularly scavenged by the Butterley Company, who are the owners of the place.

In this Ironville there are 278 pan closets, 5 water closets, 70 ashpits and tubs (14 of the latter), and 32 pig-styes.

Well, then, now we have Riddings, Greenhill Lane, Birchwood (part of) and Somercotes (part of), Swanwick, Sleetmoor Lane, Lea Brooks and Pye Bridge with no scavenging at all—a good deal over 8,000 persons now in the year 1896.

I am aware that Messrs. Seely does a little at Somercotes, on his own property, so do the Messrs. Oakes, of Riddings, but only partially. My visits there are simply to hear the old, old tale, "We can't get anybody to come and fetch the ashes, &c., away, neither for love or money, Sir," and they consequently lay about all over the premises when the ashpits (which are much too large) get full.

It will be a great pity, Gentlemen, to spoil all your efforts at sanitation to leave the question of scavenging where it is. If it be necessary for the Alfreton Ward, on what grounds can you deprive the other portions of your District of such a boon?

I hope you will at once see to make arrangements to cleanse the District throughout. As soon as you make the people's surroundings clean, and give them a lesson in tidiness about their dwellings, you will soon improve their morals, their comfort and their general health, so that they will become respectable citizens and creditable neighbours in their respective localities.

As things are now, where disease does exist, what can your Officers do if they see great heaps of filth rotting, decomposing, poisoning the atmosphere all around, when the piteous excuse for such a condition comes out truthfully from these people who can't possibly help themselves.

General Inspection, &c.—The following statistics have been compiled by myself and your Inspector, but of course the chief part of the work he has had to do personally, such as finding and enumerating the various structures under their proper headings. It will give the Council some idea of the great and ever-increasing duties which fall upon all persons who have to do with the Public Health.

I cannot sufficiently thank Inspector Spencer for the great trouble he has taken in this matter, and the Council may take it from me that the figures in the various items are substantially correct, and are the outcome of a thorough energetic determination that such important statistics should be placed upon record in the year 1896.

We begin as follows:—

Foul Conditions—Notices served, 20; Inspections made, 120.

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Structural Defects..... | Inspections 39 .. | Notices 39 |
| Over-crowding | " 2 .. | " 1 |
| Unfit for Habitation | " 2 .. | " 2 |
| Lodging Houses, 3 | " 21 .. | " 2 |
| Dairies & Milk-shops, 21 .. | " 21 .. | " 2 |
| Cow-keepers, 80. Cow-sheds, 104. | Inspections, 108 | |
| Bakehouses, 15..... | Inspections 60 .. | Notices 2 |
| Slaughter-houses | " 65 .. | " 2 |
| Ashpits & Privies 1161} | " 4000 .. | " 171 |
| Pan Closets .. 839} | " | |
| Refuse Heaps & Manure 18 | " 18 .. | " 18 |
| Water Closets, 184 | " 200 .. | " 2 |
| Defective Traps, 100 .. | " 100 .. | " 73 |
| No Disconnections, 6 .. | " 6 .. | " 6 |
| Other Faults, 10 | " 10 .. | " 10 |
| Pig-styes, 1007 | " 1270 .. | " 5 |
| Animals improperly kept, 2 | " 2 .. | " 2 |
| Offensive Trades, 3 | " 6 .. | " 1 |
| Other Nuisances, 64.... | " 64 .. | " 64 |
| Water Analysis, 1 | | |
| Schools Closed, 10 | " 10 | |

I think Gentlemen, the above makes out a fair year's work for your Officers. If you look down the list you will find the pig-stye is a formidable institution, and ought to come under control of some sort of fair and reasonable Bye-laws.

Infantile Mortality.—Before I conclude this Report I should like to say a few words about the mortality of children within the first year of their existence. In your District, as before stated, infantile mortality strictly so called is 156·82 per 1,000. In 1895 the rate was 170 per 1,000.

There were 93 children died in your District during the year, their mean age being only a few months.

I should like to know how many of these were illegitimate, how many were fed at their mothers' breast, how many were put out to nurse, how many had lost parental care through death or neglect, what artificial or patent food they had been fed upon, and many other things which would help to elucidate this important question, and thus in some measure solve the problem why your District should occupy (on this subject) such an unenviable notoriety.

If something like a "Woman's Health Society" could be formed by the members of the upper and middle classes, for the purpose of teaching poor people some of the laws of health, such as, more especially, infant feeding, clothing, cleanliness, healthy homes, cheerful surroundings, and the noxious and harmful character of drugs administered to children for various purposes, for the most part, for nothing but what is called "peace and quietness." All this might be done by lady visitors, with now and then a lady lecturer on these subjects, of whom there are plenty to be had.

This Gentlemen, completes my Report for the year 1896.

During my 24 years service as Medical Officer of Health, I can look back and see very many changes,

and notwithstanding all the faults, failings and defects which it has been my duty to point out to you in this Report, I can say, take it as a whole, your District is in a fair sanitary condition, especially those parts spoken of as being scavenged.

Frequent visits, regular inspection, and kindly talk to the offenders has removed certain offensive nuisances, which at one time were most common and prevalent, but which don't exist. You don't now walk into a place, certain to discover a nuisance, and if you do you will find it is a very recent one.

Another thing, though we may regret the epidemic of Scarlet Fever, it reflected less on the sanitary condition of the District than it did upon the people's carelessness and mode of living, and the absence of any proper system of disinfection. These were the principle "factors" in the spread of the disease.

Then, again, take your mean Death Rate for 24 years. For a District like yours, a little over 15 per 1,000 is very creditable, and not at all unsatisfactory.

I have to thank you as a Council for intelligent action upon my reports, which you receive monthly and quarterly, and I hope I shall always be thought worthy of your confidence, in consequence of my attention to my duties as Officer of Health.

To your Clerk my thanks are also due. A great deal has to be done between us which does not come before you as a Council, and he is indispensable to me, as he is to you, in his capacity as your Clerk.

To your Surveyor, with whom I have to come in contact sometimes, though always in harmony, I wish to include in my recognitions; and lastly, but not least, to your active and competent Inspector Spencer, he is particularly active in the discharge of his duties, an intelligent help to your Medical Officer of Health, and strictly conscientious to all who have to come in contact with him officially.

I beg to remain, Gentlemen, your obedient Servant,

EDWARD GAYLOR,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

ALFRETON URBAN,
BELPER RURAL, and
RIPLEY URBAN DISTRICTS.

Belper, February 17th, 1897.

